

## Abdominoplasty

An abdominoplasty, also known as a tummy tuck, is a cosmetic surgery procedure involving the removal of excess skin and fat deposits in order to achieve a tighter, flatter stomach area.

### About

People who normally seek this type of surgery have a loose abdominal wall after pregnancy or their skin is sagging after major weight loss.

An abdominoplasty involves the removal of excess skin and fat in order to achieve a more defined waistline and improve the appearance of your tummy. Depending on the extent of the problem and other associated factors such as localised fat or coexistence of stretch marks and scarring from previous operations the surgeon will discuss the most appropriate surgical technique for you.

### What is it the right choice for me?

- **Endoscopically Assisted Abdominoplasty**
- **Mini-Abdominoplasty** – indicated for patients with lower abdominal contour deformities and skin laxity
- **Modified Abdominoplasty** – indicated for excess skin and insufficient skin laxity
- **Full Abdominoplasty** – indicated for significant skin excess and abdominal wall laxity
- **High Lateral Tension Abdominoplasty** – variation of the full abdominoplasty
- **Lipo-Abdominoplasty** – finer surgical technique incorporating liposuction for more definition. Tummy tuck can be combined with removal of fat from abdomen, flanks

and mons pubis (the area just above your genitals) for a more sculpted result avoiding the appearance of a “square body”. Lipo-abdominoplasty can dramatically improve the waistline, the appearance of tummy, and scar positioning giving you the desired body contouring.

In most cases a tummy tuck can be combined with other surgical procedures such as a lipoplasty, breast surgery, or a total lower body lift to achieve the desired body sculpture and contour.

Abdominoplasty is a major cosmetic operation and therefore making sure you will get the optimal result with the minimal risk we will require at least 45 minutes of your time for a thorough clinical examination and history taking. Leaving the consultation you will have all the facts and relevant details regarding the surgery so that you will be able to make an informed choice should you wish to proceed with the tummy tuck.

### Indications

A tummy tuck is sometimes the only way to correct excessively sagging skin and loose abdominal wall that are the result of a change in weight or other genetic factors.

In most cases removing the excess skin will also improve the appearance of stretch marks.

Significant weight loss or gain damages skin elasticity, creating cellulite-type skin tone and leading to the formation of loose hanging tissue.

**Considerable weight changes are usually due to:**

- Pregnancy
- Following bariatric surgery such as gastric bypass
- Aging – increase in fat around abdominal organs
- Genetics – hereditary factors contribute to undesirable fat distribution
- Yo-yo dieting or crash diets
- Ill health (e.g. Diabetes, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease)
- Medication such as steroids, HIV drugs (causing lipodystrophy), hormones etc

Abdominoplasty is not a surgical treatment for obesity. Please note that severely or morbidly obese patients are not good candidates for this procedure. For these patients bariatric surgery would probably be a better surgical option which can be followed by a tummy tuck surgery once the weight has been stabilised.

For all our potential patients we highly recommend that lifestyle modifications and other non-surgical slimming methods (e.g. medical slimming) are followed prior to any form of cosmetic surgery. For more information on pharmacological or medical slimming please visit the relevant section on our website.

Contact us today to arrange a consultation with one of our specialist doctors who will be happy to discuss tummy tuck surgery with you, as well as answer any questions you may have.

**Surgery Explained**

An abdominoplasty is carried out under general anaesthetic. Depending on the extent of the surgery the procedure can take between 1 and 5 hours.

**During the procedure**

An incision is made from hip to hip just above the pubic area. The resulting scar can be quite extensive depending on the surgical technique, e.g. lipo-abdominoplasty vs traditional tummy tuck. However it is usually made across the bikini line and therefore can be covered with underwear. In addition, scars will fade away as time goes by.

Another incision is made to free the belly button from the surrounding skin.

The skin is detached from the abdominal wall to reveal the muscles and fascia to be tightened. Sutures (stitches) are used to tighten the muscle wall.

The remaining skin and fat are tightened by removing the excess and closing the defect.

The old belly button stalk is brought out through a new hole and sutured into place.

Liposuction may be undertaken at this stage to further refine and sculpt the area.

Finally a dressing and a compression garment are applied and any excess fluid from the site is drained.

## Aftercare

### Post-operative recovery

Recovery can take from 1 to 4 weeks and you will be advised to take at least 2 weeks off from work.

During this time you will be strongly advised to avoid any heavy physical activity such as weight lifting or exercise. A supportive abdominal compression garment should be worn for four weeks.

Your first post-operative visit will take place within the first 7 days when the surgeon will check the wounds and remove dressings, stitches or clips used during the surgery.

This surgical procedure will result in a scar, but given time, which can take up to one year, the abdominoplasty scar should soften and fade. However if scarring becomes a concern then Mesotherapy, Medical Microneedling or Platelet Rich Plasma Therapy could help refine the appearance of the skin.

### Complications

Although our **SFMedica** surgeons will take all precautions to avoid or minimise post-op problems, some of the risks involved following a tummy tuck surgery include

- Bruising and swelling
- Pain or discomfort
- Bleeding
- Infection
- Fluid accumulation
- Poor wound healing
- Unsightly scar
- Numbness or other changes in skin sensation
- Asymmetry
- Persistent swelling in the legs or DVT (deep vein thrombosis)
- Nerve damage
- Possibility of revision surgery
- Keloid (heavy scar) – increased risk in patients of Afro Caribbean origin.